United Nations S/2018/14

Security Council

Distr.: General
26 January 2018

Original: English

Letter dated 17 January 2018 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011), and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the twenty-first report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team pursuant to resolutions 1526 (2004) and 2253 (2015), which was submitted to the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities, in accordance with paragraph (a) of annex I to resolution 2368 (2017).

I should be grateful if the present letter and the report could be brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council and issued as a document of the Council.

(*Signed*) Kairat **Umarov**
Chair
Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999), 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals, groups, undertakings and entities

18-00236 (E) 310118

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Twenty-first report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 2368 (2017) concerning ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities

Summary

In Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic, Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)[a] lost control over all remaining urban areas. The group continues to transform into a terror organization with a flat hierarchy, with cells and affiliates increasingly acting autonomously. The global fight against ISIL will have to focus on the threat posed by less visible international networks. The combination of "frustrated travellers",[b] ISIL sympathizers, returnees and relocators poses an increased security risk for Member States. Attempts by ISIL to infuse money into the licit economy in combination with a greater inflow of funds for reconstruction of recaptured areas will necessitate adjusted counter measures.

The global Al-Qaida network has remained resilient and in several regions poses a greater threat than ISIL. Despite being under military pressure, Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) (QDe.129) increasingly serves as the communications hub for Al-Qaida as a whole. In North and West Africa, Al-Qaida affiliates and groups loyal to ISIL increased their activities; while in East Africa, Al-Shabaab (SOe.001) has sustained its dominance over ISIL groups. In South Asia, Al-Qaida affiliates and ISIL are taking advantage of the volatile security situation in Afghanistan. Although the recapture of Marawi City by the Philippine authorities was a military success, ISIL affiliates' temporary stronghold within the city was a propaganda victory with potential long-term consequences for the region.

The global flow of foreign terrorist fighters has continued to slow, with only individual cases being reported. However, the marked reduction of territorial control by ISIL in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic will force many foreign terrorist fighters to make a choice either to join other groups or to leave the region. With the adoption of resolution 2396 (2017), the Security Council has taken a significant step to meet the challenges posed by returnees and relocators.

[a] Listed as Al-Qaida in Iraq (QDe.115).

[b] The Term "frustrated travellers" refers to individuals that demonstrated an intention to travel to conflict zones but were unable to owing to increased control measures by Member States and remain radicalized.

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I. Overview of the threat

A. Evolving threat from Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and Al-Qaida

1. ISIL suffered strategic military setbacks in Iraq, the Syrian Arab Republic and the southern Philippines during the second half of 2017. As a response, the organization continues to emphasize external attacks. At the same time, the global Al-Qaida network has remained remarkably resilient. Al-Qaida affiliates remain the dominant terror threat in some regions, such as Somalia and Yemen, a fact demonstrated by a continuous stream of attacks and foiled operations. In West Africa and South Asia, Al-Qaida affiliates remain a threat at least as serious to Member States as ISIL, with ISIL currently remaining unable to reach a dominant position.

2. With the transformation of ISIL, its distinguishing feature — the focus on conquering and holding territory — is disappearing. This will likely also diminish the ability of ISIL to recruit from a wide range of social strata. While ISIL could previously promote itself as a proto-State structure, and therefore also attracted individuals willing to support the establishment of the so called "caliphate", its potential recruitment pool will now shrink to individuals mainly motivated to fight or to conduct terror attacks. This and increased control measures by Member States had positive effects on the overall flow of new foreign terrorist fighters, which has nearly come to a halt globally.

3. Member States highlighted that some members of both organizations have been willing and able to support each other in the preparation of attacks (see S/2016/629, para. 3). Therefore, the potential convergence of both networks, at least in some regions, is a potential new threat. In addition, Al-Qaida propaganda continues to highlight a new generation of potential leaders, such as Hamza bin Laden (see S/2017/573, para. 30), in an apparent attempt to project a younger image to its sympathizers.

B. Transformation of Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant after the loss of territorial control in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic

4. The significant and sustained military pressure levied upon ISIL in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic resulted in the loss of control by ISIL over urban areas in both countries. As a result of these setbacks, ISIL was forced to evolve and has continued its transformation from a hierarchically organized group, concentrating on conquering and holding territory, to a networked group, emphasizing terror attacks within and outside the conflict zone.[1] Member States highlighted that this new and emerging global network has a flat hierarchy, and that there is less operational command and control from ISIL core over the activities of its affiliates.

5. In addition, the propaganda machinery of the ISIL core is further decentralizing, and the quality of its material continues to decline (see S/2017/35, para. 17, and S/2017/573, para. 20). For example, Member States highlighted that ISIL has claimed responsibility for attacks for which no conceivable connection to the group can be established and that some online publications, such as *Rumiyah*, have ceased to appear. Nevertheless, while its public propaganda machinery deteriorates, foreign terrorist fighters and ISIL members and sympathizers continue to be able to skilfully employ social media, encryption technology and the dark web to communicate with each

[1] Member State information. This transformation has been ongoing for over a year. See S/2017/573, paras. 16 and 17.

other and motivate and facilitate attacks. These capabilities, a growing number of "frustrated travellers", the persistent threat posed by terrorist groups recruiting insiders in critical infrastructure[2] and the risk that returnees and relocators bring leadership and enhanced terrorist capabilities and infuse these into already existing networks of radicalized sympathizers are major concerns for Member States.

6. As a result of this ongoing transformation, a new phase in the fight against ISIL is beginning. While, in the first phase, the territorial grounding of the group allowed for easier location of its fighters, including foreign terrorist fighters within the conflict zone, during the next phase, locating individuals posing a threat will become more challenging. Information sharing concerning the identity of foreign terrorist fighters as well as known ISIL members will remain vital. The sanctions list remains one of the key global instruments in this regard.

II. Regional trends

A. Levant

7. During the reporting period, military pressure levied upon ISIL in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic resulted in significant territorial losses for the group. With the recapture of Qa'im in Iraq and Dayr al-Zawr, Raqqah and Albu Kamal in the Syrian Arab Republic, the group no longer controls major cities in either country.[3] However, Member States reported that ISIL cells continue to operate in most recaptured cities. In addition, smaller groups of ISIL fighters remain in the countryside east of the Euphrates River in the Syrian Arab Republic and in the deserts of northern Iraq. Member States indicated that Jaysh Khalid Ibn al-Waleed (QDe.155) commands between 700 and 1,500 fighters in the south of the country. Several Member States reported that, after the recapture of Raqqah, Dayr al-Zawr and Albu Kamal, ISIL fighters fled towards the north, potentially with the intention of exiting the country via its northern borders. A smaller number of fighters moved towards the south of the country.[4] Given the fluid situation, Member States were not able to give precise estimates of how many foreign terrorist fighters remain in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic.

8. Member States highlighted that the clearance of recaptured areas, such as Mosul and Raqqah, is challenging, as ISIL leaves behind large numbers of booby traps and improvised explosive devices. These slow down stabilization efforts.

9. Coupled with its military losses, the once abundant revenues of ISIL have fallen by more than 90 per cent since 2015.[5] The group's recent losses of oil and gas fields in the Syrian Arab Republic, including the Al-Omar and Al-Tanak oil fields and the Conoco gas field, is a considerable setback for ISIL, given its former reliance on hydrocarbon revenues.[6] However, ISIL could continue to profit from the trade in hydrocarbons by extorting distribution and through its control of checkpoints.[7] ISIL may retain some limited access to oil, but to the extent that ISIL maintains any such access, it is likely to use it for its own operations and not for revenue generation.[8]

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[2] S/2017/573, para. 10 and resolution 2341 (2017).

[3] Member State information.

[4] Member State information.

[5] Member State information.

[6] Member State information. Until the latest territorial losses in Dayr al-Zawr Province, ISIL earned revenues of several million dollars per month from oil.

[7] Member State information.

[8] Member State information.

Instead, as previously reported by the Monitoring Team, ISIL is expected to revert to "Al-Qaida-in-Iraq-style" financing tactics (see S/2017/35, para. 22).

10. Although the size of the reserves that ISIL had been able to maintain and hide is not clear, the Team has received information that funds continue to flow from the ISIL core to its branches, while the branches are becoming increasingly crucial for the ISIL global brand, given defeats in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic.[9] However, affiliates are looking for ways to diversify their income to be able to sustain themselves independently of the ISIL core.[10]

11. ISIL is relying on established networks and facilitators across the Middle East to move funds using hawala and cash couriers.[11] These facilitators are experienced professionals providing both licit and illicit financial services and capable of using more complex methods, such a trade-based money-laundering.[12] When there have been disruptions to these facilitation networks, such as owing to arrests, ISIL has been able to adapt and set up new routes.[13]

12. ISIL is penetrating legitimate businesses in the region by using seemingly unconnected or "clean" individuals with access to the financial system as fronts, while ISIL members operate in the background.[14] Member States remain concerned that ISIL may be able to generate profits via such ISIL-related businesses, among them money exchange houses and agricultural, real estate and construction companies, and invest laundered funds locally, regionally and internationally.[15]

13. **The Monitoring Team recommends that the Committee write to Member States highlighting the risk that ISIL-related individuals may attempt to get involved in legitimate businesses within their jurisdiction and encourage them, in accordance with their national laws and regulations, to raise awareness concerning this risk among relevant private sector stakeholders, encouraging them also to exercise increased vigilance and appropriate due diligence procedures to mitigate this risk.**

14. Member States continued to raise concerns that more opportunities for ISIL to earn money could open up as international aid starts flowing into liberated areas, especially as ISIL might be involved in local businesses such as construction companies.[16] Thus, reconstruction funds will have to be carefully targeted so as not to reach the wrong hands.[17] Similarly, as the ability of ISIL to run its financial operations from the conflict zones continues to be challenged, it will become essential that ISIL be unable to establish financial hubs within countries in the region. Hence, it remains crucial that the sanctions list is up to date as a tool to tackle the efforts of ISIL at evasion (see S/2017/35, para. 66).

15. **The Monitoring Team recommends that the Committee write to Member States highlighting the risk of the misuse of aid and reconstruction funds and encouraging them, in accordance with their national laws and regulations, to raise awareness of this risk among the relevant organizations and companies involved in stabilization and reconstruction efforts in the conflict zones,**

[9] Member State information.
[10] Member State information. See also S/2017/467, para. 12.
[11] Member State information. See also S/2017/573, para. 2.
[12] Member State information.
[13] Member State information.
[14] Member State information.
[15] Member State information.
[16] Member State information. See also S/2017/467, para. 16.
[17] Member State information.

promoting heightened vigilance and partner vetting during the implementation phase of their projects.

16. Several Member States highlighted to the Team that the Al-Nusrah Front for the People of the Levant (ANF) (QDe.137) remains one of the strongest and largest Al-Qaida affiliates globally. The aim of ANF is to absorb smaller groups within the Syrian Arab Republic using threats, violence and material incentives.[18] ANF has reverted to forced recruitment, including recruitment of minors.[19] Within the Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) coalition, ANF remains the dominant force, commanding between 7,000 and 11,000 fighters, including several thousand foreign terrorist fighters, and has its main power base within Idlib Province.[20]

17. Abu Mohammed al-Jawlani (QDi.317) continues to face challenges to his leadership of HTS, with some within ANF arguing that the group should have a more international outlook and not concentrate only on the situation within the Syrian Arab Republic.[21] Member States assess that these disagreements led to the formation of a group subsequently adopting the name Ansar al-Furqan, which consists of prominent hard-line clerics, including Sami al-Aridi (not listed) and Iyad Nazmi Salih Khalil (QDi.400). Both insist that the group can operate only under the supervision of Aiman Muhammed Rabi al-Zawahiri (QDi.006).[22] In November 2017, Al-Zawahiri publicly criticized HTS, in particular its "arrests" of several clerics loyal to Al-Qaida.[23]

18. ANF appears to be largely self-sufficient in terms of funding.[24] The group is entrenched in society and able to make money through its stronghold in Idlib Province (by inserting itself into and profiting from local businesses such as bakeries and factories) and checkpoints, kidnapping for ransom of local business persons, taking over the resources and finances of other groups or "war spoils" and exploiting charity operations and aid, as well as local fundraising through charities.[25] Some Member States also highlighted that ANF continues to benefit from the looting of antiquities within the territory that the group controls.[26] As a result of its access to finances, ANF has been able to consolidate its dominance.[27]

B. Arabian Peninsula

19. According to the assessment of Member States, Al-Qaida remains a serious threat within the Arabian Peninsula. AQAP continued to plot external attacks, including recently in the wider Middle East. For example, in July 2017, a plot targeting Jordan was disrupted. The attack was planned in Yemen by the AQAP deputy, Khalid Omar Batarfi (not listed).[28]

20. In Yemen, AQAP is still operating in Mukalla, Shabwah, and Ma'rib, while some of its leaders are located in the Jubah and Rawdah areas, in Ma'rib Governorate, the Wadi' district in a village known as Mujan, the Mahfad district in an area known

[18] Member State information.
[19] Member State information.
[20] Member State information.
[21] Member State information.
[22] Member State information.
[23] "Let us fight them as a solid structure", As-Sahab Media Foundation, 28 November 2017.
[24] Member State information.
[25] Member State information.
[26] For example, one Member State reported that ANF had invited potential foreign buyers from the region to purchase antiquities from the Idlib museum. Recently, the restitution process for antiquities looted by ANF was initiated by a Member State.
[27] Member State information.
[28] Member State information.

as Jabal,[29] the Mudiyah district near an area known as Sadd Wajd, and in the Lawdar district in a mountainous area known as Junh. AQAP leaders and fighters are strengthening their ties with Yemeni tribes and families, in many cases through marriages. In addition, Member States highlighted that AQAP is conducting and financing social activities to demonstrate its governing and humanitarian capabilities to the Yemeni community.

21. AQAP continues to play a leading role in the propaganda activities of the Al-Qaida core (see S/2017/573, para. 30). In addition to *Inspire* (an English language magazine), *Al Masra* (an Arabic language magazine) is becoming one of the leading outlets in which leaders of the Al-Qaida core, the Organization of Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) (QDe.014), Al-Qaida in the Indian Sub-continent (AQIS), and Al-Shabaab (SOe.001) have been interviewed and announced attacks. Member States assess that AQAP in Yemen serves as the communications hub for the entire Al-Qaida organization.

22. AQAP continues to be under sustained military pressure. During the past six months, airstrikes have removed many of its field commanders and a significant number of its fighters and have shrunk the group's financial capabilities.[30] Consequently, AQAP is currently trying to avoid clashes with local tribes.[31] The group is reorganizing itself to expand its influence and gain more recruits. According to Member State information, in October 2017, the AQAP leader, Qasim Mohamed Mahdi al-Rimi (QDi.282) appointed a new sharia official, Abdullah Mubarak (not listed), a Yemeni national and graduate of Iman University in Sana'a, to replace the deceased Saudi national, Ibrahim al-Rubaysh. In addition, the group has appointed a number of new "emirs" in different regions who report to the military commander of the organization, Ammar al-San'ani (not listed).[32]

23. Member States reported that AQAP operatives are using encrypted instant messaging applications and wireless equipment, which has been distributed to the group's "emirs" and to owners of safe houses. Since mid-2017, the financial situation of AQAP has further declined owing to the sustained pressure levied upon the group; therefore, the group has been generating funds by selling weapons and ammunitions to Yemeni tribes and arms dealers.[33] Additional income streams are bank robberies, kidnapping for ransom and extortion.[34]

24. Despite the current difficulties of AQAP, Member States assess that ISIL in Yemen remains weaker than AQAP. ISIL cells are active in Aden, Bayda', and in some areas in Qayfah, where clashes with security forces took place. The group is also responsible for several assassinations of Yemeni officials in Aden.[35] On 29 November 2017, ISIL in Yemen claimed responsibility for a car explosion targeting the Ministry of Finance in Aden; the Amaq News Agency of the ISIL core alleged that up to five guards were killed.

[29] Member State information.
[30] Member State information.
[31] Member State information.
[32] Ammar al-San'ani is believed to be the *nom de guerre* of the Yemeni national, Ibrahim Ali Mas'ud al-Sanfi, the brother in-law of the deceased Nasir al-Wuhayshi (Member State information).
[33] Member State information.
[34] Member State information.
[35] Member State information.

C. Africa

1. North Africa

25. Member States have expressed concerns about the resilience of groups in Egypt loyal to ISIL and indicated that two separate wings operate within the country. On the Sinai Peninsula, Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis (ABM), which publicly declared allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi[36] in November 2014 (see S/2017/35, para. 41), continues to be active. Furthermore, during the reporting period, ISIL cells on the Egyptian mainland became more visible.[37] According to Member State information, ABM remains the stronger group, potentially commanding up to 1,000 fighters; it does not control the cells on the mainland, but there is some coordination between the two groups.

26. In October 2017, ABM gained additional finances through a bank robbery in Arish, in North Sinai, where the group is now concentrated; and in November 2017, the group attacked a mosque in nearby Al-Rawda, killing more than 300 worshippers.[38] The group continues to depend on support from some local Bedouin tribes, through which it is able to run makeshift training camps, manufacture improvised explosive devices, store arms and explosives and plan operations.[39] Meanwhile, other Bedouins cooperate with the security authorities.[40] Member States reported that ABM controls some of the smuggling routes on the Peninsula, moving cash and weapons, and has been joined by foreign terrorist fighters relocating from Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic. ABM also continues to receive money from the ISIL core through third countries in the region.[41] Its current "emir", Abu Usama Al-Misri (not listed) is from mainland Egypt.

27. On the Egyptian mainland, small cells of ISIL sympathizers, in particular in urban areas, continue to operate.[42] According to the assessment of Member States, these cells are responsible for a string of attacks against the Coptic community. According to one Member State, several individuals accused of being involved in these attacks have been arrested. There is interchange between ISIL in Egypt and Libya across the desert borders, and a senior ISIL member from Libya sits on the shura council of ABM.[43]

28. Despite a decrease in the intensity of the threat in Libya during the reporting period, ISIL remains intent on rebuilding its capabilities. Member States indicated that the group's dispersed fighters sustain an underground presence. Some ISIL cells, particularly in Darnah, and Sabratah, south of Sirte, and Bani Walid, have recently reinforced their presence by means of fighters transferred from southern Libya and with relocators and returnees from Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic.[44] One Member State outlined that ISIL fighters have been regrouping in the Sirte Basin and attempting to reach out to tribal networks to extend their presence. The group continues to demonstrate relevance, through regular terrorist attacks (see S/2017/573, para. 33).

29. Member States reported that fighters from regional ISIL affiliates have been moving to Libya, establishing links with ISIL and collaborating, mainly in terms of

[36] Listed as Ibrahim Awwad Ibrahim Ali al-Badri al-Samarrai (QDi.299).
[37] Member State information.
[38] Member State information.
[39] Member State information.
[40] Member State information.
[41] Member State information.
[42] Member State information.
[43] Member State information.
[44] Member State information.

training, supply of weapons and logistical support. Fighters from Boko Haram[45] are also maintaining small cells inside Libya.[46] Concern has also been expressed that Boko Haram elements could use the western border and south-eastern borders of Libya to access other regional countries.[47] Member States assessed that there is a potential for the transfer of leaders from ISIL in Libya to other conflict zones in West Africa and the Sahel region, including Mali.[48]

30. Member States reported that ISIL in Libya continues to "tax" networks involved in human smuggling and trafficking. While smugglers, including antiquities traffickers, and ISIL fighters operate in close proximity, ISIL is not itself running the networks.[49] ISIL also retains roadblocks and roving checkpoints in Libya to generate funds.[50]

31. In Tunisia, the security situation improved as compared with the previous reporting period. However, the threat from both ISIL and Al-Qaida persists. The self-proclaimed ISIL affiliate, Jund al-Khilafah in Tunisia, continues to operate small cells in the country's mountainous regions.[51] The Uqba bin Nafi Battalion of AQIM also maintains a presence in the country.[52] Both groups have claimed recent attacks in Tunisia. A campaign by the Tunisian authorities has led to the arrest or elimination of a considerable number of fighters. A regional Member State also expressed concern about the threat that returning foreign terrorist fighters[53] continue to pose to Tunisia and the region.

2. West Africa

32. Member States reported that, over the course of 2017, most Sahelian terrorist entities have established formal links with either ISIL or Al-Qaida. However, to date, no rivalry between the various groups has been observed. The situation in Mali remains critical. Al-Qaida coalition, the Group for the Support of Islam and Muslims (see S/2017/573, paras. 1 and 37–39), succeeded in consolidating its different tribal and ethnic loyalties. Since March 2017, the coalition has been responsible for a series of deadly attacks[54] against the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), and it attacked a convoy of the Prime Minister of Mali on 8 November. On 5 July 2017, the group confronted Nigerien forces for the first time.[55]

33. Member States highlighted that the threat posed by Al-Qaida and ISIL-related groups continues to spread to central and southern Mali, as well as neighbouring countries. In Burkina Faso, a complex attack against the Café Istanbul in Ouagadougou, similar to previous attacks in Bamako, Grand Bassam and Ouagadougou, killed 18 people on 13 August 2017. Four days later, a mine attack against a military vehicle was allegedly carried out by an ISIL affiliate, Ansar al-Islam.[56] This group controls around 100 fighters and was also responsible for the

[45] Listed as Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'Awati Wal-Jihad (QDe.138).
[46] Member State information.
[47] Member State information.
[48] Member State information.
[49] Member State information.
[50] Member State information.
[51] Member State information.
[52] Member State information.
[53] Several Tunisian foreign terrorist fighters held high-ranking positions within ISIL.
[54] For example, the attacks against MINUSMA in Kidal on 20 September 2017 and near Douentza on 9 November 2017.
[55] "Niger: la coalition terroriste d'Iyad Ag Ghali revendique l'attaque de Midal", Radio France Internationale, 10 July 2017.
[56] Member States assessed that the group is led by Jafar Dicko (not listed).

attack on a military base in Nassoumbou in December 2017.[57] It remains active in Soum and Oudalan provinces in Burkina Faso. The stronger ISIL affiliate in the region remains a faction of Al Mourabitoun (QDe.141), led by al-Sahrawi (see S/2017/35, paras. 43 and 44).[58] According to a Member State, this ISIL faction remains active in Niger and Mali and is developing contacts in Libya.

34. However, many attacks in the region have not been claimed by a specific group, which presents a challenge to Member State security forces analysing the threat.[59] Moreover, while, initially, attacks were focused on domestic and international military and security forces, the local population is increasingly targeted.[60] As during the period from 2012 to 2013, teachers are frequently threatened, which has forced hundreds of schools to close in the region, presenting a political, economic and social challenge.[61]

35. Member States highlighted that Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa Province generally continue to operate in separate areas and follow different strategies and tactics (see S/2017/35, para. 45). To date, no conflict has appeared to emerge between these two groups. Boko Haram continues to use suicide attacks as one of its main terrorist tools. According to public reports, 2017 has seen an unprecedented high number of female suicide bombers used by Boko Haram.[62]

36. During the reporting period, the funding sources for these groups did not change. Member States explained that theft and extortion by the hijacking of vehicles with their cargo remain important sources of funds. Kidnapping for ransom remains one of the main source of funding, and kidnapping of the local population, including religious representatives, teachers, local soldiers and children, continues.[63] Member States reported that ISIL- and Al-Qaida-affiliated groups in the region benefit from "taxing" the flow of drugs, goods and individuals through the territory in which they are active.

37. Transnational movements of foreign terrorist fighters remain a concern for Member States in the region. Recently, Member States reported an increasing number of cases of fighters switching loyalties between various entities throughout the region. Some operate in a mercenary manner, switching between different groups, owing to financial incentives.[64]

3. East Africa

38. The Al-Qaida affiliate, Al-Shabaab, remains resilient and has sustained its dominance over ISIL affiliates in Somalia. Member States assess that Al-Shabaab posed a greater threat than ISIL to Somalia and the countries which contribute troops to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). In 2017, Al-Shabaab pursued its goal of establishing a presence beyond Somalia and conducted operations seeking to set up bases in Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti.[65] Additionally, Al-Shabaab enhanced its capabilities and frequency of attacks by recruiting insiders. For instance, most

[57] Member State information.
[58] The group calls itself Islamic State in the Greater Sahara.
[59] Member State information.
[60] Member State information.
[61] Member State information.
[62] See Jason Warner and Hilary Matfess, "Exploding stereotypes: the unexpected operational and demographic characteristics of Boko Haram's suicide bombers", Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, August 2017.
[63] Member State information.
[64] Member State information.
[65] Member State information.

attacks in Mogadishu in 2017 were facilitated by insiders who assisted, directed and provided logistical support, including intelligence.[66]

39. The movements of foreign terrorist fighters, couriers and individuals performing logistical tasks between Somalia and Yemen continues. These movements are facilitated by former Al-Shabaab fighters who relocated to Yemen and are active in AQAP.[67] Although the group initially pursued a plan to eliminate foreign terrorist fighters that came to Somalia from outside the immediate region to join ISIL (see S/2017/573, para. 48), more recently, Al-Shabaab has been welcoming foreign terrorist fighters whose skills and knowledge are essential in training their fighters. These fighters serve temporarily as trainers and leave once the transfer of knowledge, capabilities and skills is accomplished.[68]

40. The efforts of AMISOM have to some extent degraded Al-Shabaab's capabilities and decreased its financing streams in some strategic towns where the fighters have been dislocated. Subsequently, Al-Shabaab fighters are resorting to criminality, including looting, to finance their operations.[69] However, in territories under their control, in addition to known financing streams (see S/2017/573, para. 47), Al-Shabaab is exchanging prisoners for money, running quasi-business enterprises, and collecting protection fees and "taxes" from farmers, herdsmen and shop owners.[70]

41. Despite the inroads made by ISIL in Puntland and southern Somalia in early 2017, ISIL has not expanded as initially expected, owing to several factors. Firstly, as a result of rivalry between the two groups, Al-Shabaab leaders will not permit Abdikadir Mumin (not listed) to be more influential and have more territorial control than themselves. Secondly, Member States observed that Mumin has not recently issued directions to his fighters to conduct attacks, which is attributable to a power struggle between Mumin and his subordinates, consequently paralysing their operations.[71] One Member State assessed that Mumin does not command substantive support from his fighters because he is not a well-known figure within extremist circles, lacks charisma and was unwell during most of 2017. Additionally, the Puntland authorities continue to crack down on ISIL activities, weakening the impact the group can have.

42. ISIL in Yemen continues to provide material and training support to ISIL in Somalia, although the support is limited and unreliable.[72] Consequently, Member States highlighted that ISIL cannot sustain the high salaries initially paid to its fighters. Like Al-Shabaab, ISIL has begun collecting revenues from locals. This development is likely to heighten the conflict between the two groups as they compete for control of resources.

43. Human traffickers and smugglers are offering services to various destinations, including Libya, at a fee of $5,000 to $10,000 per person.[73] This is likely to attract relocating or returning foreign terrorist fighters who prefer to avoid travelling through big towns, choosing instead to travel through remote areas to avoid detection. Specifically, in 2016 and 2017, foreign terrorist fighters exploited smuggling links into Libya and within the country to facilitate their movements. Subsequently, Member States reported that they had captured some foreign terrorist fighters destined

[66] Member State information
[67] Member State information
[68] Member State information
[69] Member State information
[70] Member State information
[71] Member State information
[72] Member State information
[73] Member State information

for Libya to join ISIL, or that they were dealing with returnees, comprised of families of foreign terrorist fighters believed to have died in combat in Libya.

D. Europe

44. During the reporting period, ISIL continued to enable and inspire attacks in Europe, demonstrating that the continent remains a priority region for external attacks by ISIL supporters. Member States emphasized that foreign terrorist fighters in the conflict zones continue to motivate and encourage attacks by sympathizers via the Internet and social media. In addition, a growing group of "frustrated travellers" present a second security challenge. Member States explained that investigations of recent attacks, such as the attacks in Spain in August 2017, demonstrated a tightly interwoven network between sympathizers in Europe and foreign terrorist fighters within the conflict zones. In addition, in some cases, these networks also included current or former Al-Qaida facilitators abroad.

45. As in other regions, only a few new foreign terrorist fighters travelling from European countries to the conflict zones have been reported to the Team. In addition, the number of returnees going back to Europe has dropped.[74] However, Member States continue to express concern that returnees may infuse already existing networks of sympathizers with new capabilities, such as bomb-making skills, and therefore present a potential significant challenge for authorities. While attacks and foiled terrorist plots demonstrated limited technical capabilities and the continued use of unsophisticated methods, such as knives, hammers or vehicles, several Member States reported the seizures of significant amounts of components for improvised explosive devices, and, in some cases, sustained attempts to produce explosive materials.[75] Member States also remain concerned about instructional videos and material, disseminated via the Internet and social media, explaining various designs for such devices.

46. Member States highlighted that the return of minors continues to present difficult legal issues (see S/2017/573, para. 12) and emphasized that some children were radicalized and even involved in fighting in the conflict zones and that it is difficult to manage or prosecute such cases, in part since specialized legislation is not yet available.[76] Several Member States expressed concern about the impact that the release of currently imprisoned returnees may have on the domestic security situation. The difficulty in obtaining criminal evidence from within the conflict zones is frequently a challenge for prosecutors and only allows the imposition of limited sentences for potentially highly dangerous individuals. Radicalization within the prison system also remains a challenge (see S/2017/573, para. 10).

E. Central and South Asia

47. As elsewhere, the travel of new foreign terrorist fighters from Central and South Asia to the conflict zones has virtually ceased, initially because of measures taken by Member States, but later by the lack of appetite or capacity on the part of the ISIL core to receive new foreign terrorist fighters. ANF and its various related groups are, however, still attractive to some Central Asian expatriates who have been radicalized

[74] Member State information.

[75] For example, the incident of the acetone peroxide (TATP) factory of the terrorist cell in Cambrils. The original plan was to attack the Sagrada Familia cathedral in Barcelona. See *Institute for the Study of War*, "The Coordinated ISIS campaign in Europe", 20 September 2017.

[76] "Le cas particulier des enfants soldats", *Le Monde*, 3-4 December 2017.

and recruited as fighters.[77] Member States remain concerned that returnees might exacerbate the regional terrorism threat. Some relocators originating from Central Asia have been involved in terrorist attacks in Turkey, the Russian Federation and European countries in the past two years. A number travelled from Turkey to South-East Asia, where their onward travel and current fate are unknown.[78]

48. Despite having been further degraded by Afghan and international military operations, ISIL continues to resist and mount attacks, especially in Kabul. In some areas, it is in violent competition with the Taliban; in others there appears to be some mutual accommodation.[79] The number and geographic dispersal of ISIL-affiliated elements in Afghanistan has increased. Some Member States expressed concern that the presence of ethnic Uzbek and Tajik fighters in northern Afghanistan could potentially lead over time to an ISIL threat to the Central Asian States. Overall, in the country, ISIL commands between 1,000 and 4,000 fighters, which include former members of the Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) (QDe.132) and the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU) (QDe.010), fighters from outside the immediate region, as well as Afghan Taliban defectors. A significant number of the fighters formerly belonged to TTP.[80] Member States highlighted that ISIL in Nangarhar continues to lose personnel owing to sustained military pressure but is able to replenish its ranks fairly quickly.

49. ISIL in Afghanistan obtains funds by extorting the population and agricultural production in Nangarhar.[81] The group has made some money from timber and kidnapping for ransom but does not have any large, internal sources of revenue and would struggle without support from the ISIL core.[82] To date, there are no indications that it is involved in the drug trade. Indeed, ISIL in Afghanistan has executed its own members suspected of involvement in the trade.[83] ISIL in Afghanistan has received some financial support from the ISIL core, but has been encouraged to become more self-sufficient and recognizes that funding from the ISIL core may not continue.[84] It is therefore under pressure to find new ways of raising money, especially if it is to maintain its competitive advantage of paying fighters higher wages than other groups in the region.

50. Member States highlighted that there was an increase in fighters operating in Afghanistan. Fighters loyal to the Taliban combined with members of various Al-Qaida affiliated groups could number as many as 60,000 fighters, an increase from 2016.[85] Member States reported that, currently, there are more than 20 groups active in the country. The Taliban remains the largest, with about 40,000 to 45,000 fighters.[86] The others are ISIL in Afghanistan and a range of Al-Qaida affiliated entities, including TTP, Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LeT) (QDe.118), Lashkar i Jhangvi (LJ) (QDe.096), Lashkar-e-Islam (LeI), Jundullah, the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM) (QDe.088), and IMU. IMU has split and has some factions, varying in size and location, which are working with Al-Qaida, ISIL or the Taliban.[87]

51. Member States estimate the number of foreign terrorist fighters currently operating in Afghanistan to be between fewer than 10,000 and as many as 15,000. A

[77] Member State information.
[78] Member State information.
[79] Member State information.
[80] Member State information.
[81] Member State information.
[82] Member State information.
[83] Member State information.
[84] Member States information. See also S/2017/573, para. 57.
[85] Member State information.
[86] Member State information.
[87] Member State information.

significant number of these hail from the immediate region. Relocators from Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic have also travelled to Afghanistan. One Member State estimates the current number at around 200.

52. Al-Qaida continues to cooperate with the Taliban in return for sanctuary and operating space (see S/2017/409, paras. 14–16). Al-Zawahiri is still assumed to be in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region (see S/2017/409, para. 17). According to one Member State, AQIS fighters operate as advisers and trainers of the Taliban, with 150 to 180 operatives present in southern and eastern Afghanistan. AQIS also recruits personnel from remote areas of India and Bangladesh.[88] Despite Member State concerns, it is not clear that significant numbers of Al-Qaida elements ultimately travelled to the Syrian Arab Republic to join the fight there (see S/2017/573, para. 56).

53. Pakistani military operations conducted in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas resulted in the arrest of 4,000 terrorists through more than 2,000 intelligence-based operations; approximately 100 local support networks have also been disrupted.[89] The military operations also denied space for ISIL to establish an organizational structure in the area. Terrorist attacks claimed by ISIL are mainly carried out by members of local groups with cross-border planning and support by ISIL.[90]

54. One Member State expressed concern about the vulnerability of the Maldives to returnees, since the number of Maldivian fighters per capita is one of the highest in the world.

F. South-East Asia

55. Member States assess that the losses of ISIL in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic are exacerbating the threat to South-East Asia, as its funds and fighters are scattered around the world. Although the majority of the approximately 1,000 foreign terrorist fighters from South-East Asia have not yet returned, those that have, as well as relocating foreign terrorist fighters, present a transnational threat.[91] The ISIL-linked groups operating within different Member States in the region have cooperated with one another with regard to the flow of fighters, funds and weapons.[92] Furthermore, fighters from outside the region have been active and, in many cases, arrested or killed in the region.[93]

56. The region has seen a marked increase in terrorist plots in the past couple of years.[94] In Indonesia alone, there were at least 10 ISIL-inspired attacks from January 2016 to June 2017.[95] With Mujahidin Indonesian Timur (MIT) (QDe.150) largely neutralized, Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD) (see S/2017/573, para. 62) and Jamaah Ansarul Khilafah (JAK) remain two of the most significant ISIL-linked terrorist networks in Indonesia, each with a presence in several provinces.[96] The ideological leader of JAD is Oman Rochman (QDi.407), while JAK is led by the former prisoner

[88] Member State information.
[89] Member State information.
[90] Member State information.
[91] Member State information.
[92] Member State information. See also Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict, "Marawi, The 'East Asia Wilayah' and Indonesia", 21 July 2017.
[93] Member State information. For example, Malaysian authorities have arrested dozens of foreign terrorist fighters of various nationalities. In one case, they arrested and deported a senior ex-ISIL commander from Iraq. During the siege of Marawi, foreign terrorist fighters from outside the region were killed.
[94] Member State information.
[95] Member State information.
[96] Member State information.

and one-time Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) (QDe.092) member, Abu Husna (not listed).[97] To date, JAD has been the more active group in terms of attacks, while JAK is seen as a growing threat.[98]

57. The death of the influential Malaysian foreign terrorist fighter, Muhammad Wanndy Mohamed Jedi, has led to a temporary reduction in the threat to Malaysia, as he actively directed plots from Syria, including the deadly Movida attack (see S/2017/35, para. 60). Overall, since 2013, 18 plots have been uncovered in Malaysia, a mixture of plots directed from the Syrian Arab Republic and locally inspired as well as lone-actor attacks.[99] Furthermore, in 2017, the Malaysian authorities disrupted cells within Malaysia recruiting locals and foreigners to fight in the southern Philippines.[100]

58. The defeat of ISIL affiliates in Marawi City in the southern Philippines after five months of intense urban guerrilla warfare is a setback for the aspirations of ISIL in the region, given the deaths of leaders such as Isnilon Totoni Hapilon (QDi.204), the "emir" of ISIL in East Asia,[101] the Maute brothers (see S/2017/573, paras. 59 and 60) and the Malaysian national, Mahmud Ahmad, a well-connected facilitator.[102] In their fight to recapture the city, Philippine forces were confronted with the militants' use of snipers, improvised explosive devices, diversionary attacks, drones, underground tunnels and fox holes and human shields.[103]

59. Despite these losses, Marawi emerged as a major symbolic and propaganda victory for ISIL, as ISIL affiliates succeeded in occupying an urban area, and, according to Member States, the ISIL threat to the Philippines persists despite the end of the siege and the deaths of senior leaders. In their assessment, the siege could have long-term repercussions for the region and serve as inspiration for other militants. The publicity value of the siege was apparent in the increased focus by ISIL on South-East Asia and it calls for foreign terrorist fighters to migrate to the region in its propaganda.[104] However, in the short term, ISIL-affiliated militants in the southern Philippines will need some time to regroup, especially with no obvious leader capable of replacing Hapilon and uniting the disparate factions.[105]

60. ISIL affiliates are not the only threat to the region, as South-East Asia also faces a threat from long-term Al-Qaida affiliates with lasting appeal in the region.[106] As with Al-Qaida affiliates in other parts of the world, regional Member States expect that Al-Qaida affiliates in South-East Asia, in particular JI, will be resurgent.[107] A shifting of alliances from ISIL to Al-Qaida is possible, as many South-East Asian ISIL militants initially emerged from the JI movement.[108] According to Member States, JI is biding its time and remains dangerous.

61. Funding for groups in South-East Asia is raised through donations from sympathizers (usually in small amounts), criminal activities (see S/2017/35, para. 61)

[97] Member State information.
[98] Member State information.
[99] Member State information. Only the Movida attack has been successful.
[100] Member State information.
[101] S/2017/35, para. 59. See also the proscription of Islamic State East Asia by Australia, available from www.nationalsecurity.gov.au/Listedterroristorganisations/Pages/Islamic-State-East-Asia.aspx/.
[102] Member State information.
[103] Member State information.
[104] Member State information.
[105] Member State information. Although some names for a possible successor, such as the Malaysian Amin Baco (not listed) or the Filipino Furuji Indama (not listed), have been floated.
[106] Member State information.
[107] Member State information.
[108] Member State information.

and funding from the ISIL core channelled through third countries, both within and outside the region.[109] From late 2016 to 2017, ISIL-affiliated groups in the southern Philippines received hundreds of thousands of dollars from the ISIL core in advance of the Marawi siege.[110] Furthermore, the siege may result in a financial windfall, as ISIL affiliates were able to secure significant funds by looting banks, only some of which have to date been recovered by the authorities.[111]

III. Impact assessment

62. Multiple regional stakeholders have intensified their efforts against ISIL. In this regard, Saudi Arabia convened, in November 2017, the first meeting of the Ministers of Defence Council[112] of the Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition, a coalition of 41 Member States dedicated to fighting ISIL. Furthermore, Turkey took measures aimed at denying ISIL access to the financial system as well as its generation of funds and to disrupt the movement of foreign terrorist fighters and funds through middlemen or facilitators.

63. Estimates of stolen or looted artefacts are difficult to make, as artefacts were taken from museums and storage facilities as well as from archaeological dig sites and cemeteries. In addition, previously unknown artefacts were unearthed as part of looting activities. However, one Member State estimates that the number of artefacts illegally removed from Syria could be as high as one million pieces. Member States bordering the conflict zone have seized several tens of thousands of items during the past few years.[113] While the inventories of some museums were evacuated, the collections of other museums, such as the Idlib museum, are considered entirely "lost". One Member State reported that the items in Syrian museums, including items in storage facilities, are generally registered in the national Syrian catalogue, maintained by the Directorate General of Antiquities and Museums.

64. Member States highlighted to the Team that items in Syrian and Iraqi museums are generally marked with a registration number in indelible ink. This number corresponds to the number in the respective museum's catalogue. It is difficult to remove these numbers without damaging the items. Such catalogue numbers can be useful identifiers for items stolen from museums within the conflict zone, enabling Member States authorities and private sector participants to identify suspicious items.

65. **The Monitoring Team recommends that the Committee write to Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic as well as other Member States which are at risk of their cultural heritage being looted by terrorist organizations, highlighting the usefulness of catalogue registration numbers for the identification of stolen and looted items, encouraging them to compile lists of numbers from museum catalogues and exchange the relevant numbers of items that are known or suspected to have been looted and stolen with Member States bordering the conflict zones, as well as potential destination countries for stolen or looted antiquities and with relevant international organizations.**

[109] Member State information. See also S/2017/573, para. 65.

[110] Member State information.

[111] Member State information.

[112] "Saudi Arabia launches counter-terrorism summit. The inaugural meeting of the IMCTC Ministers of Defence Council has the theme 'Allied Against Terrorism'", *The National*, 24 November 2017.

[113] Member State information.

IV. Sanctions measures

A. Travel ban

66. Member States are concerned that, following the military defeat of ISIL in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic, a significant number of foreign terrorist fighters currently remaining in both countries will decide to leave, either to return home or to relocate to other conflict zones, as they are not easily able to blend in with the local population. ISIL had collected passports and other identification documents from arriving foreign terrorist fighters and stored them for potential use for international travel.[114] In addition, ISIL obtained around 9,700 blank Syrian passports when it captured passport offices in various cities in the country.[115] Although the numbers of these blank Syrian passports have been reported to the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), for inclusion in its Stolen and Lost Travel Document Database, Member States highlighted the risk that returnees or relocators could use these during their attempts to travel internationally.

67. Member States, in particular those bordering the conflict zones, continue to highlight the difficulties in identifying foreign terrorist fighters, returnees and relocators, as well as listed individuals. While the INTERPOL-United Nations Security Council Special Notices, both in their open and confidential versions, carry biometric data of listed individuals, the collection of such data, as well as the inclusion of biometric data for individuals included in the INTERPOL foreign terrorist fighter database, remains an important task, as it enables Member States to identify individuals irrespective of the travel documents they present to authorities.

68. On 21 December 2017, the Security Council adopted resolution 2396 (2017), highlighting the issue of returnees and relocators. The resolution is an update to resolution 2178 (2014) and addresses a range of issues and includes measures reflecting the threat assessments and recommendations made by the Team since 2016. The Security Council, in paragraph 15 of the resolution, also highlights the importance of biometric data for the identification of foreign terrorist fighters and encourages Members States to share biometric data relating to foreign terrorist fighters with INTERPOL.

69. **The Monitoring Team recommends that the Committee write to Member States highlighting the importance of controlling the international travel of returnees, relocators, foreign terrorist fighters and listed individuals, emphasizing the importance of biometric information for the identification of individuals, in particular individuals likely to travel with stolen, forged or altered travel documents, highlighting the urgency of the matter; and, in the light of resolution 2396 (2017), encourage again[116] those that have not yet done so, in accordance with their national laws and regulations, to submit biometric data, in particular high-quality pictures and fingerprints of listed individuals, to the Committee and similar biometric data concerning foreign terrorist fighters, returnees and relocators to INTERPOL.**

70. In resolution 2396 (2017), the Security Council also emphasizes passenger name record (PNR) data, in addition to advance passenger information as an important tool and encourages Member States to share PNR data with relevant or concerned Member States to detect foreign terrorist fighters returning to their countries of origin or nationality or travelling or relocating to a third country. In paragraph 12, it furthermore encourages Member States to use PNR data to implement the travel ban

[114] Member State information.
[115] Member State information.
[116] S/2017/573, para. 91.

levied upon listed individuals on the sanctions list. The Team has been discussing the issue of PNR data with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Air Transport Association (IATA) since 2013. The Team will continue its engagement with Member States, international organizations and associations, as well as private sector stakeholders, on this issue and will update the Committee on its findings in due course.

71. Following the adoption of resolution 2178 (2014), the Team continued its engagement with Member States, ICAO, IATA and private sector stakeholders on the implementation of advance passenger information systems. The Team also actively takes part in workshops on advance passenger information organized by the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force. In October 2017, ICAO adopted advance passenger information as a new standard in annex 9 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation.[117] The Team took an active part in the discussions during the adoption by the Council of ICAO. The adoption of advance passenger information as a global standard is a significant step to ensure that the flow of passenger data can be effectively utilized to implement the travel ban against listed individuals and to control the flow of foreign terrorist fighters, returnees and relocators.

72. The Team also continued its cooperation with Members States concerning the implementation of the travel ban on land borders. In many cases, porous borders and the challenges associated with border management continue to hinder its effective implementation. Specifically, inadequate measures for screening against the sanctions list at land and maritime border points are likely to be exploited by foreign terrorist fighters using "broken travel routes"[118] while returning or relocating to other conflict zones. Additionally, some Member States have expressed concern that foreign terrorist fighters are exploiting the provisions for free movement of persons in some regional economic blocs to ease their movement. Information sharing remains a key mitigating measure in this regard.

73. **The Monitoring Team recommends that the Committee write to Member States highlighting the risk that porous land and maritime borders present for the travel of listed individuals, foreign terrorist fighters, returnees and relocators and encourage those that have not yet done so, in accordance with their national laws and regulations, to put in place appropriate border control management measures, such as bilateral or regional border control information sharing mechanisms, to address this issue.**

74. As indicated in the previous report (see S/2017/573, para. 92) the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has developed a new Migration Information and Data Analysis System. This system is currently operational in 19 countries, mostly in Africa. Although not intended as a border control system, advance passenger information data and INTERPOL notices and databases, as well as other border management systems, can be integrated into the system. Several Member States operate the system not only at their international borders but also in refugee and displaced persons camps. Given the growing importance of this tool, the Team will continue to engage with Member States, as well as IOM, to collect additional information on its technical features in order to give an overview to the Committee in one of its update briefings as mandated in paragraph 99 of resolution 2368 (2017).

[117] International Civil Aviation Organization, International Standards and Recommended Practices, Annex 9 to the Convention on International Civil Aviation, Facilitation, 15th edition (October 2017), p. 67. Available from www.iacm.gov.mz/doc/ICAO/an_09_Facilitation_15ed_October%202017_rev.26.pdf.

[118] The term "broken travel routes" refers to foreign terrorist fighters, returnees and relocators using more than one mode of transport during their international travel, such as combining air travel with travel by vehicle or ship.

B. Asset freeze

75. The Team continues to cooperate with Member States and with the World Customs Organization (WCO) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), in particular their joint Global Container Control Programme, to raise awareness of the strategic role of customs agencies for the implementation of the assets freeze relating to the international movement of goods and currency, as well as the arms embargo. In November 2017, UNODC briefed the Committee on the programme.

76. During visits to Member States, the Team continued to highlight the importance of effective communication and information sharing between customs and relevant law enforcement, intelligence and security agencies. In this regard, the Team encourages Member States to participate in the Global Container Control Programme. The Programme allows Member States to implement domestic cross-agency information sharing in a structured way. The core element of the programme is the creation of inter-agency port control units,[119] staffed by personnel from different law enforcement agencies, including customs, police and intelligence agencies.

77. Port control unit officers are equipped and trained to better identify and inspect high-risk containers through risk analysis and other profiling techniques, using all available information. The inter-agency units are also equipped to exchange information with counterparts in other countries, using a secure communication application developed by WCO called ContainerCOMM.

78. During visits to Member States, the Team noted that the cooperation between customs agencies and financial intelligence units is generally limited to separate analysis of the information obtained from declarations of currency and other financial instruments provided by customs agencies and in the suspicious transaction reports provided by the units. Those Member States that have established combined information flows highlighted that the combination of both information streams achieved markedly better results in the fight against terrorism financing and money-laundering.

79. One Member State created a joint permanent team of financial intelligence unit and customs experts which meets on a regular basis to process and analyse data on financial flows linked to the international trade of goods, in addition to data available in the currency declaration forms and in the suspicious transaction reports. Such joint analysis facilitates the identification of crimes, including terrorism financing and the movement of goods and currency related, directly or indirectly, to listed individuals and entities. In particular, both authorities could have a greater capacity to mitigate risks in areas significantly vulnerable to terrorism financing and illicit trade of artefacts and other luxury goods at free zones or ports.

80. **The Monitoring Team recommends that the Committee write to Member States to encourage those that have not yet done so, in accordance with their national laws and regulations, to explore measures, such as creating a joint permanent team of financial intelligence unit and customs experts, to enhance the sharing of information and joint analyses, including on financial flows linked to international trade of goods, between customs agencies and financial intelligence units.**

81. During the reporting period, the Team continued its outreach to private sector stakeholders in the financial industry. In October 2017, the Team participated for the first time in a conference co-hosted by the Union of Arab Banks, the Federal Reserve

[119] Port control units have also been created in several airports

Bank of New York and the International Monetary Fund, which was held at the headquarters of the Federal Reserve Bank. The Team highlighted the sanctions regime as a key tool in the global fight against terrorism financing and outlined its current threat assessment concerning the changing aspects of ISIL financing activities following its military setbacks in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic. The participants highlighted the importance of such a direct exchange for their work mitigating the risk of ISIL and Al-Qaida financing, in particular as far as correspondent banking relationships are concerned, and for their efforts to increase the vigilance of financial institutions to secure the flow of transactions from and into the conflict zones while mitigating the risk of misuse by ISIL and Al-Qaida. The Team is currently discussing with the Union of Arab Banks the possibility of a more specialized in-depth and structured follow-up dialogue.

C. Arms embargo

82. The flow of arms and ammunition to listed individuals and entities remains a concern for Member States, and preventing the flow of legitimate arms from being diverted and misused by terrorist groups is a challenge for both the private sector and Member State authorities. One Member State explained that some manufacturers took direct control of their own overseas deliveries, sending personnel to travel on the vessels transporting the arms. However, Member States also highlighted that arms in conflict zones are sold across front lines and between groups. Therefore, ensuring that the intended recipient does not divert material remains of paramount importance.

83. **The Monitoring Team recommends that the Committee write to Member States encouraging those that have not yet done so, in accordance with their national laws and regulations, to raise awareness among relevant weapon manufacturers of the risk of diversion of delivered arms and ammunitions to terrorist organizations and the implementation of detailed and in-depth know-your-customer procedures as a tool to mitigate this risk.**

84. The Team continues to actively participate in various global expert forums concerning improvised explosive devices. Member States highlighted to the Team that most improvised explosive devices components used in terror attacks have been supplied and assembled locally or regionally. Therefore, information sharing between intelligence and law enforcement authorities, including customs agencies, within Member States and between Member States on the issue of improvised explosive device components is a crucial tool to mitigate this threat.

85. Programme Global Shield [20] is aimed at reducing the ability of terrorists to obtain materials to design improvised explosive devices. The programme works on enhancing the ability of customs and relevant border control agencies to monitor licit movements of chemicals and components used by terrorists to manufacture improvised explosive devices and to counter illicit diversion and trafficking. Currently, 94 countries participate in the programme and are connected via a secure communications application to exchange information on suspicious shipments and to report seizures. While the initial geographical focus of the programme was the Central Asian region, Afghanistan, India and Pakistan, it is now expanding to Africa, the Middle East and South-East Asia.

86. **The Monitoring Team recommends that the Committee write to Member States to encourage those that have not yet done so, and, in accordance with their national laws and regulations, to share information on materials used by terrorists with Programme Global Shield in order to ensure that the global**

[20] PGS was started in 2010 by WCO with the support of INTERPOL and UNODC.

monitoring efforts of these materials can be updated accordingly. In addition, the Monitoring Team recommends that the Committee write to Member States to encourage those that have not yet done so to participate in the programme.

87. Member States continue to express concerns about the misuse of commercially available drones by terrorist groups, in particular following the extensive use of drones by ISIL (see S/2017/573, paras. 18 and 96). Some Member States have implemented controls on the import and trading of such equipment. However, the unregulated global trade of drones via the Internet was highlighted as a potential security risk.[121]

D. Sanctions list

88. During the reporting period, Member States from a greater range of regions actively engaged in the process to list individuals and entities associated with ISIL and Al-Qaida, and, on the basis of those proposals, eight individuals and five entities have been added to the sanctions list, including several high-profile ISIL foreign terrorist fighters and key ISIL and Al-Qaida facilitators and financiers. At the same time, through active engagement with Member States, the quality of the current list entries has also been substantively improved. While the list remains the core operational instrument for the implementation of the sanctions measures imposed by the regime, it is also increasingly becoming a strategic document which reflects the changing threat posed by ISIL and Al-Qaida. The Secretariat continues to update the Team on the development of the enhanced data model, pursuant to paragraph 48 of resolution 2253 (2015).

89. Currently, biometric information for listed individuals is transmitted only via INTERPOL-United Nations Security Council Special Notices. The distribution of such data is therefore limited to those authorities within Member States that have access to data provided by INTERPOL. Transmission of biometric data, in particular, pictures, via the list, would enable a wider range of authorities, as well as private sector stakeholders, to access this information.

90. **The Monitoring Team recommends that the Committee instruct the Secretariat, to explore, in cooperation with the Monitoring Team, technical possibilities as to how biometric data, in particular pictures of listed individuals, could be made available via the sanctions list, specifically for implementers using a printed copy of the list to undertake screening.**

V. Monitoring team activities and feedback

91. Between June and December 2017, the Team conducted 20 country and technical visits. It continued to promote the sanctions regime through its participation in 42 international conferences, meetings and workshops, including those of UNODC, the European Union, the Global Counterterrorism Forum, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the African Union Commission and the International Peace Support Training Centre. The Team is also an official observer in the Counter ISIL Finance Group and participates in the FTF working group of the Global Coalition Against Da'esh.

[121] Member State information

92. The Team held two regional meetings of intelligence and security services focusing on the threat posed by ISIL, Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities in South-East Asia and West Africa. The Team raised awareness among the participating services concerning the potential use of the sanctions regime as an integral part of a national counter-terrorism strategy and encouraged more intensive sharing of information in the region to counter the threat. During the reporting period, no Member State provided the Team with specific information demonstrating that ISIL directly engages in the trafficking of persons and sexual violence as a means to generate income for the group.

93. The Team continued its engagement with entities and associations in the financial, energy, antiquities trading and information and communications technology (ICT) sectors. During the reporting period, the Team continued to engage private sector stakeholders in the ICT sector and participated in several workshops and a special meeting organized by the ICT for Peace Foundation, the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate and UNODC. During these events, the Team raised awareness of the provisions of the sanctions regime and the sanctions list. The Team cooperates closely with the Executive Directorate in the production of mandated reports of the Secretary-General (see resolution 2368 (2017), para. 101). The Team remains an active member of the working groups of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force of the Office of Counter-Terrorism, participating in its working groups.

94. The UNODC Global Programme against Money-Laundering, Proceeds of Crime and the Financing of Terrorism, in cooperation with the Team, the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate and INTERPOL, developed a dedicated three-day training course on ISIL (Da'esh), Al-Qaida and 1988 sanctions regimes. As part of the pilot phase of the project, two train-the-trainer events were organized by OSCE and the Global Programme, with the active participation of the Team. The first full training course was held in Bishkek from 12 to 15 December 2017. Fifteen Kyrgyz officers from various government agencies participated in the training. The United States of America and the Russian Federation provided voluntary financial contributions for the development and delivery of the project. The Team also remains an active participant in workshops of the Terrorism Prevention Branch of UNODC focusing on the prevention and countering of dual-use of chemical materials dedicated to Iraq and attended the first expert group meeting on improvised explosive devices, chaired by the Terrorism Prevention Branch and the Global Programme, held from 28 to 30 November 2017 in Vienna.

95. The Team welcomes feedback on the present report through 1267mt@un.org.

Annex

Litigation by or relating to individuals and entities on the sanctions list

1. The legal challenges involving individuals and entities on the sanctions list, or whose names the Committee has removed therefrom, that are known to be pending or to have been recently concluded are described below.

Pakistan

2. The action brought by the Al Rashid Trust (QDe.005) regarding the application of the sanctions measures against it remains pending in the Supreme Court of Pakistan, on appeal by the Government of an adverse decision in 2003. A similar challenge brought by Al-Akhtar Trust International (QDe.121) remains pending before a provincial high court.[1]

3. In addition to the two cases mentioned above, a trustee of Pakistan Relief Foundation (listed as an alias of Al-Akhtar Trust International (QDe.121)) has challenged the freezing of his bank account.[2]

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

4. The United Kingdom is defending judicial review challenges to its decision-making with regard to the designations under this sanctions regime of Abdulbasit Abdulrahim, Abdulbaqi Mohammed Khaled and Maftah Mohamed Elmabruk (all delisted). The cases are currently proceeding with hearings related to the use of closed evidence.[3]

[1] Information provided by Pakistan.
[2] Information provided by Pakistan.
[3] Information provided by the United Kingdom.

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